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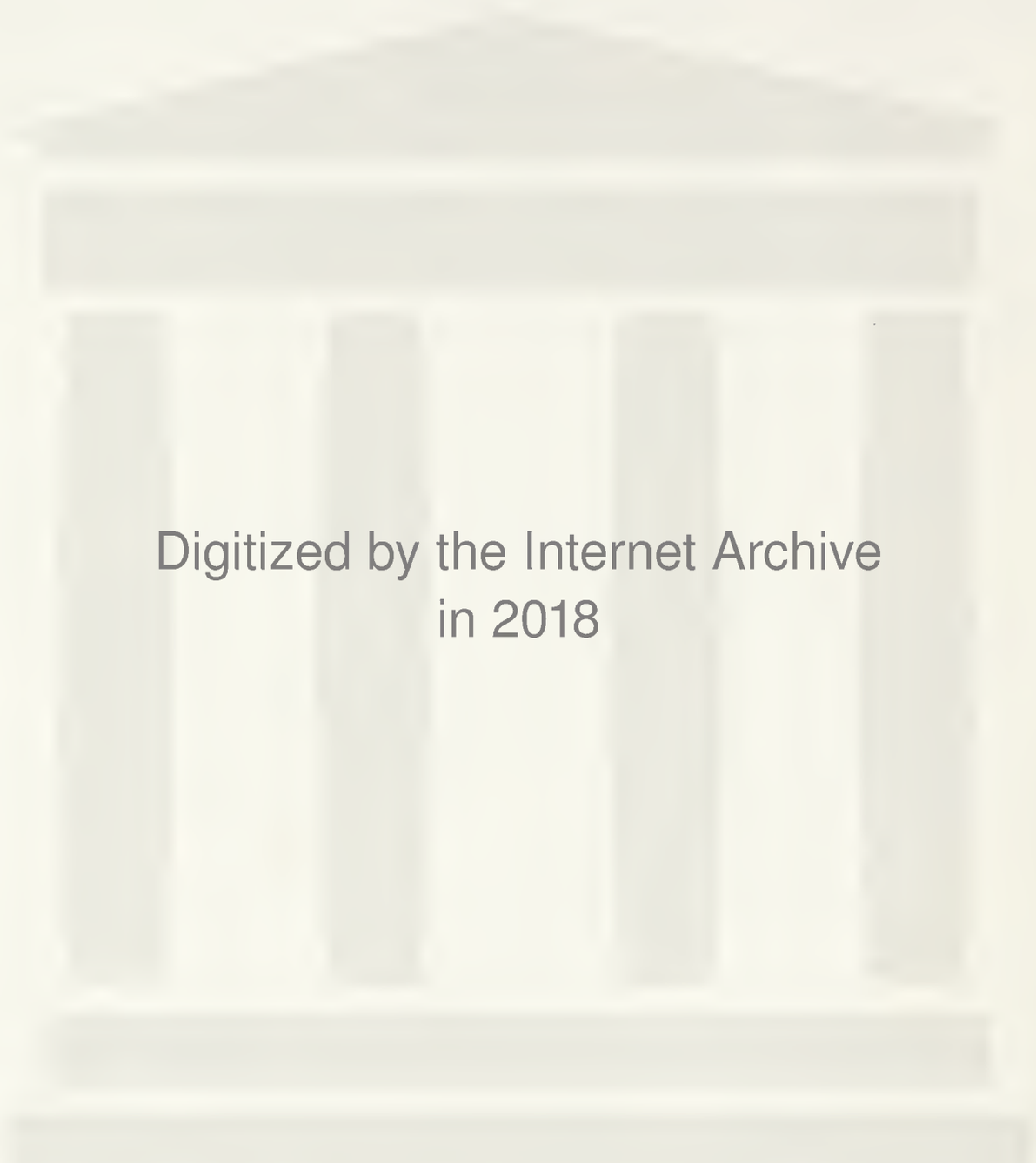
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HISTORY OF THE FAMILY
OF
THOMAS HART BENTON HOCKADAY
1835 - 1956

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Compiled by
Olin S. Hockaday
Fort Worth, Texas

October 1, 1956

Hockaday, Olin S
History of family of Thomas Hart
Benson

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ORIGIN OF THE NAME "HOCKADAY"

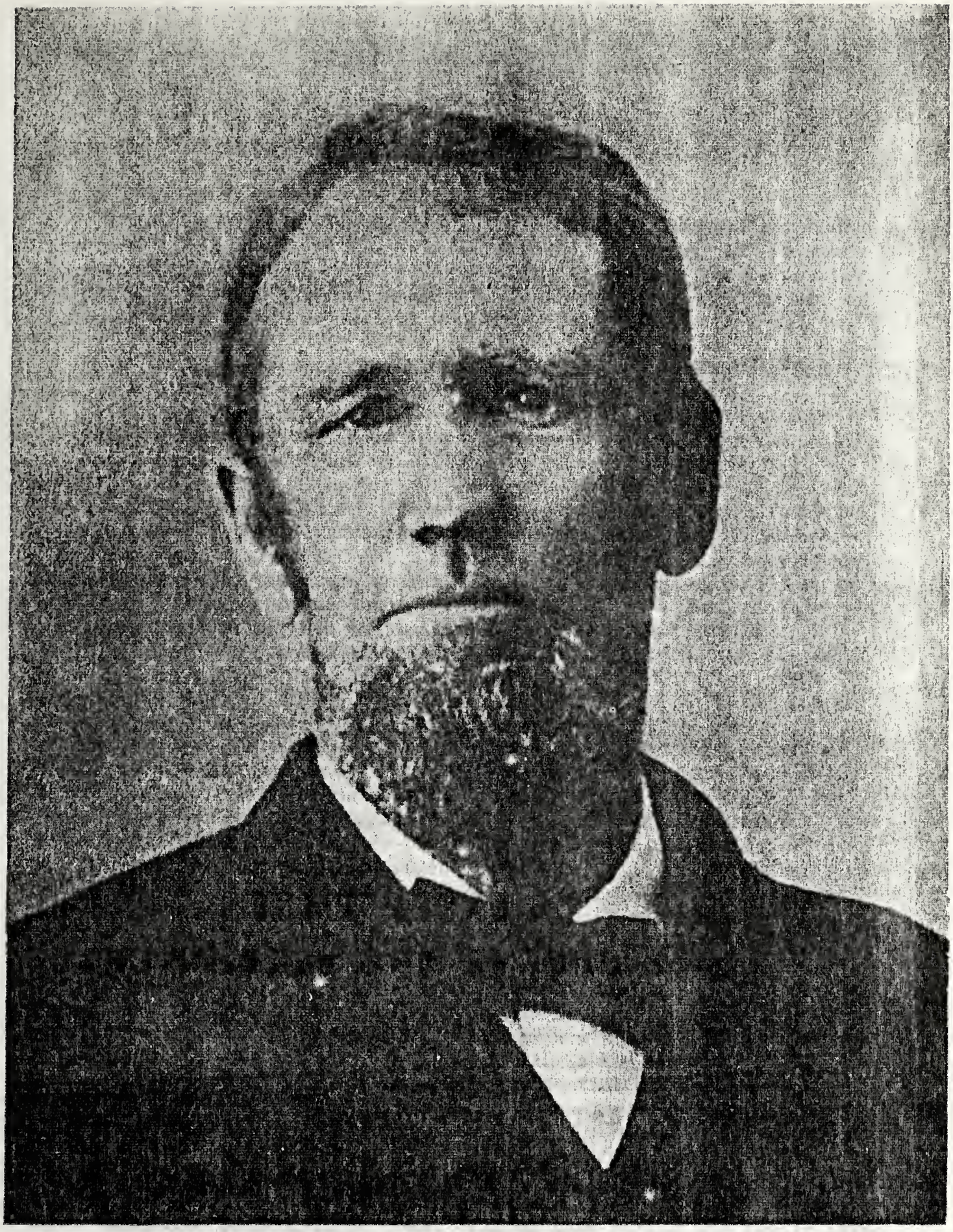
Our people seem to have come from England. Back in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries when families began to take surnames for more accurate identification, ours took the name of a feast-day in the church (probably Church of England) called "Hockaday." This day occurred on the second Tuesday after Easter, commemorating an English victory over the Danes.

- As told Olin S. Hockaday by Frank Woodville Hockaday of Wichita, Kansas; they met in Chicago about 1945.

FIRST HOCKADAY TO COME TO AMERICA

Among my files is an entry to the effect that William Hockaday (no middle name given) came to Virginia in 1640. So far I have been unable to verify this statement.

- Olin S. Hockaday



T. H. B. Hockaday
1835 - 1918

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

THOMAS HART BENTON HOCKADAY

Thomas Hart Benton Hockaday was born April 29, 1835 at Lynchburg, Virginia. At the age of 12 his parents moved to Spring Hill in Maury County, Tennessee. In my (Olin Hockaday's) files is a pencil notation, resulting I believe from a conversation with my father reading as follows:

> T.H.B.'s parents died early and a cousin, a Presbyterian minister, the Reverend Fred Thompson of Spring Hill, Tennessee took him and "raised" him. It is thought his (T.H.B.'s) father was married twice as there were two sets of children. T.H.B. had a sister named Emma.

On January 12, 1858 Mr. Hockaday was married to Maria Elizabeth (Lizzie) Kerr. They lived at Helena, Arkansas, where Mr. Hockaday taught school. The record isn't clear as to just how long they lived at Helena or when they came to Texas (one reference gives the year as 1859 - this looks reasonable; for in 1862 he joined a Texas Cavalry unit, as reported further on in this account. In an album of Mrs. Hockaday's was found an entry in Grandpa's handwriting, "Thomas H.B. Hockaday, Mount Pleasant, Tennessee, January 30, 1859." This date is two months after the birth of their first child, Fred, and as Mount Pleasant is near Spring Hill, this entry may mean that they simply went back home to visit and to show off their first born.) The story I (Olin Hockaday) have carried through the years is that a number of people from Giles County, Tennessee (this county adjoining Maury County to the south) came to Texas, settling around Ladonia-Pecan Gap. Since there was no public school system, they sent for Mr. Hockaday to come to teach school for their children. I find references to Ladonia Institute and Giles Academy, the latter taking its name from the county from which many of the people came. Evidently, Mr. Hockaday was connected with these two schools at one time or another over a period of 15 years. He believed in the classics and placed emphasis on reading, writing, arithmetic and the English language. He was a strict disciplinarian, and I have had many men, former pupils, tell me how he cracked their knuckles with a ruler when they misbehaved. Mr. Hockaday was well versed in Latin, Hebrew, and Greek and was often called upon to assist in examination of candidates for the Presbyterian ministry. He was quite a scholar of his day, and a favorite recreation of his was reading the New Testament in the Greek.

In 1862, Mr. Hockaday joined the 6th Texas Cavalry, and from August of that year until the close of the Civil War he was an ordnance officer under Brigadier General L. B. Ross. During this period his family lived with the Kerrs at McKinney.

In addition to teaching school, he acquired a farm about a mile west of Pecan Gap, and built a cotton gin, which he and his sons operated for a number of years. Mr. Hockaday was a progressive farmer and took advantage of all the mechanized implements of his day.

On January 12, 1881 Mrs. Hockaday died, the following children having been born to this union:

	Born	Died
Frederick Thompson Hockaday	November 25, 1858	January 10, 1909
Emma Blanche Hockaday	January 13, 1861	December 22, 1905
Edgar Park Hockaday	December 11, 1864	February 11, 1947
Clarence Brown Hockaday	January 3, 1868	November 16, 1947
Jimmie Williamson Hockaday	July 29, 1870	December 21, 1947
Albert Shepperson Hockaday	January 31, 1873	
Ela Hockaday	March 12, 1875	March 26, 1956

The elder daughter, Emma, who now was a young woman 20 years of age, was married and lived at Bonham. She took Ela, while Mr. Hockaday reared the boys with the aid of a colored housekeeper, Jennie. By this time he had a nice country home near Pecan Gap, saw to it that his children received all the education available at that time, and instilled the principles of Christian living in their minds.

His son, Brown, married Minnie Belle Scott, who kept house for Mr. Hockaday for about a year, until he married Miss Misouri B. Bird of Corsicana December 22, 1892.

Miss Sue, as Mr. Hockaday called her, was a devoted wife and, to us children, a lovable step-grandmother. Some of the most delightful recollections of my childhood were the visits that my younger brothers and I had with them. A favorite holiday of ours was driving from our home by pony and buggy the ten miles to their home on Saturday morning to spend the night and return on Sunday afternoon. Depending on the season of the year, we were fascinated by the operation of the cotton gin or the reaper, and the prospect of catching a few perch in the gin pool.

Both Grandpa and Aunt Sue seemed to enjoy having us, for it was always a most happy experience. While Grandpa was a stern sort of a person, he also had a kindly way, a keen sense of humor, and we were very fond of him, as well as of Aunt Sue. Grandpa had a routine of jokes that he always went through, much to our delight, e.g.

> After evening prayers (he made us all get down on our knees) he told us to "holler when we got to sleep." He would ask one of us the following morning at the breakfast table, "Which eye did you close first when you went to sleep last night?"

When he was too old to attend to the duties on the farm, Mr. Hockaday and his wife moved to Ladonia, where they acquired a lovely home and spent the evening of their life in contentment.

In early manhood Mr. Hockaday joined the Presbyterian Church U.S. (Old School) and for over forty-five years, he was an honored and useful ruling elder. He served with distinction in the courts of the church, being active on various committees and frequently as commissioner to meetings of the various courts. During his prime he was faithful in support of Austin College. "He loved his church, he loved the Kingdom of God. He lived his religion. He was strict in his own life and in his view of what the Bible teaches, what men ought to believe, and how they ought to live. He was for many years a subscriber to the 'Christian Observer' and it and his Bible were constantly by his side, especially after the infirmities of age kept him confined to his room." (The Reverend E. L. Moore)

He was a Master Mason for over fifty years, and a Royal Arch Mason more than forty-five years.

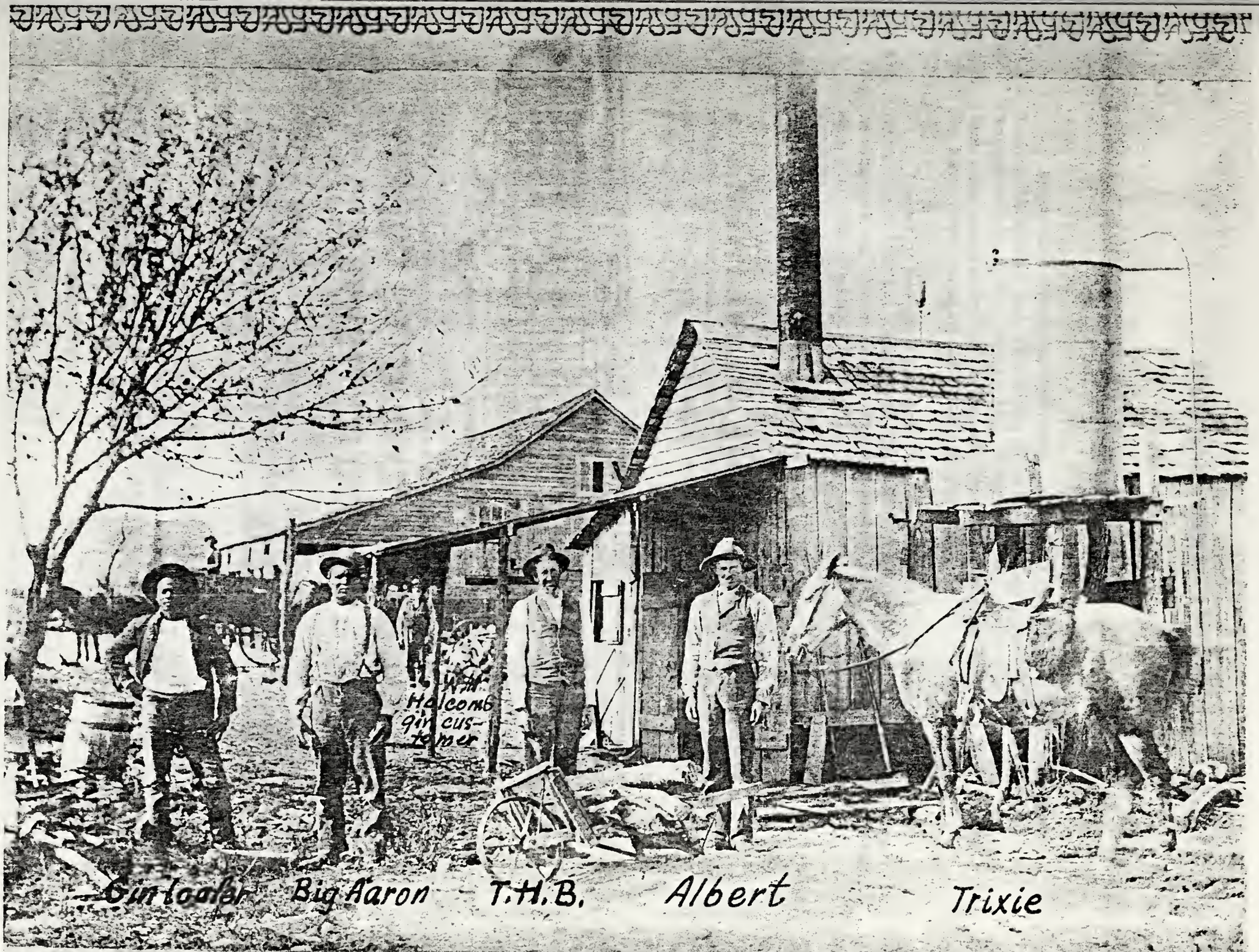
Mr. Hockaday died January 8, 1918 and is buried beside his first wife in the family plot at Ladonia.

Source Data

1. Entries in Mr. Hockaday's family Bible
2. Two letters from T.H.B. to his father-in-law, Major G. W. Kerr, written in 1858 from Helena, Arkansas
3. Album kept by Maria E. (Lizzie) Kerr
4. Records of the Presbyterian Church U.S., Synod of Texas and of the General Assembly
5. Memory of Albert S. Hockaday, Sr.
6. Notes kept by Olin S. Hockaday of conversation with his father
7. Obituary from "The Christian Observer" written by the Rev. E. L. Moore, then pastor of the Main Street Presbyterian Church at Honey Grove, and verified by my father. Clipping pasted in this same Bible. O. S. H.

Prepared by
Olin S. Hockaday
Fort Worth, Texas
August 10, 1956

THE HOME PLACE NEAR PECAN GAP—1895



THE COTTON GIN—1895

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

FREDERICK THOMPSON HOCKADAY

Frederick Thompson Hockaday was the first born of Thomas Hart Benton Hockaday and his wife, Lizzie, having come into the world November 25, 1858. While the record is not clear, the family at the time was probably living at Helena, Arkansas where T.H.B. seems to have been engaged in teaching school.

It early became apparent that Uncle Fred was a man of extraordinary talents. Under the firm name of Hockaday, Gray & Company, he engaged in the hardware and implement business at Honey Grove, Texas and with his business acumen and his personal charm became very successful. His wife's name was Molly and they had two children, Earl and Nellie.

Uncle Fred and his wife built one of the handsomest homes in Honey Grove. I recall as a child going there for dinner with my mother, father and younger brothers following church services on Sunday; I was awed by its splendor and frightened by a polar bear rug on the parlor floor.

Uncle Fred was a great lover of livestock, being particularly interested in horses and Jersey cows. He was also a dog fancier. He was one of the first to point out the advantages of developing pure bred stock and by his example of exhibiting horses and Jersey cattle at the Texas State Fair in Dallas he was a potent influence in calling attention to improvement of breeds.

By the standards of his day, he became a wealthy and influencial citizen, but his wife, Molly, was overly ambitious. This led to friction and resulted in divorce. Along about this same time and undoubtedly due largely to this emotional unrest at home, Uncle Fred's health began to fail. He developed acute rheumatism which present day medical science might have diagnosed as arthritis. At any rate, he was in great discomfort most of the time.

As so frequently happens, poor health and tragedy at home were accompanied by reverses in business. He went bankrupt about 1905, continued in poor health and died January 10, 1909. He is buried in the family plot at Ladonia.

It is tragic that one with so much promise, held in such high respect, and beloved by hundreds both within his family and with out should have come to such an end. It is to be noted that he was barely 50 years old when he died.

Prepared from memory by
Olin S. Hockaday
August 1, 1956

EMMA BLANCHE JOHNSON AND FAMILY
Husband, Harvey (with hand on his father's shoulder),
Forrest and Elizabeth, the infant.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

EMMA BLANCHE HOCKADAY

Emma Blanche Hockaday was born January 13, 1861, the second child of Thomas H.B. Hockaday and his wife Lizzie. On October 28, 1886 she married Brown Spurlock Johnson, a lawyer, and took up residence at Bonham, Texas. To this union the following children were born:

Harvey Brown	Born in 1881
Forrest Hockaday	August 27, 1883
Sarah Elizabeth (now Mrs. Elizabeth Walker)	
Ruth Kerr (now Mrs. Ruth Kyle)	

Harvey died in 1921 and Forrest on February 26, 1952 in St. Petersburg, Florida at the Veteran's Hospital. (Forrest was a first lieutenant in World War I.)

When Auntie was hardly six years old her mother died, so Aunt Emma took her into her home and reared her along with her own children.

Aunt Emma and Uncle Brown moved to Durant during the Indian Territory days (Oklahoma was admitted to statehood in 1907.) Aunt Emma died prematurely of pneumonia December 22, 1905 and was buried at Durant.

One of the happy recollections of my childhood was Mama taking us children, riding the T & P "Cannonball" from Honey Grove over to Bells where we changed to the Katy "Flyer" and went to Durant for a delightful visit of two or three days. Aunt Emma had a vibrant personality and abounded in hospitality, and we had a great time.

Aunt Emma was a great person in her own right. She not only gave of herself to her own children but extended her love to her younger sister Ela. She early recognized that Ela was a person with great possibility, and much of Auntie's greatness undoubtedly stemmed from this early inspirational atmosphere. Auntie often remarked that she wished she had "Sissy's" (as she called her) hearty laugh.

Not only was Aunt Emma devoted to her own family, but like her father, loyal to the Presbyterian Church and gave much of her energies to its welfare.

Aunt Emma represents the best in the tradition of the Hockaday family, and I think we should all be very proud of her.

Prepared by
Olin S. Hockaday
With help from Elizabeth, Ruth and Mary
September 13, 1956

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

EDGAR PARK HOCKADAY

Edgar Park Hockaday was born December 11, 1864. He apparently grew up with the rest of the family at Pecan Gap but as a young man removed to Honey Grove, working as a railroad brakeman and later in his brother Fred's hardware store. His wife was named Nina (from whom my mother learned how to make whipped cream to go on boiled custard, a favorite dessert for Sunday dinner during wintertime.) They had three children, the eldest being Fay Elizabeth (Bessie - now Mrs. Holcombe, living at San Antonio), Albert Thomas and Hallie Alfred. It is understood that Albert is now in El Paso and Hallie in San Antonio.

Uncle Edgar was always mechanically minded and about 1905 he moved to Dallas and worked for Munger Gin Company. While installing gin machinery in Ballinger he had the misfortune of having an arm caught in the saws and almost lost it. He had previously lost part of one hand in a coupling accident while working as a brakeman at Honey Grove.

Along about 1920 Uncle Edgar moved to San Antonio and spent the rest of his working life as a storekeeper, I believe, at Kelly Field. He died February 11, 1947 and is buried in San Antonio.

Composed from memory by
Olin S. Hockaday
August 7, 1956

C. BROWN HOCKADAY
1868 - 1947

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

CLARENCE BROWN HOCKADAY

Clarence Brown Hockaday was born January 3, 1868 presumably at the home place near Pecan Gap. During his boyhood two unfortunate things happened, the first being that at the age of 12 in jumping off a porch with an open bladed knife in hand he lost the sight of one eye. A year later his mother died. Along with the other brothers at home, he grew to manhood with a colored woman, Jennie, keeping house for his father.

During boyhood he received such education as was available and worked on his father's farm and in his cotton gin.

On February 16, 1892 he married Minnie Belle Scott of Athens, Alabama. To this union the following children were born:

	Born	Died
Olin Scott	January 10, 1893	
Benton Samuel	March 17, 1895	
Clarence Brown, Jr.	July 18, 1897	June 7, 1955
Donald Emmett	February 7, 1901	
Lizzie	November 2, 1903	July 18, 1911

Papa moved to Honey Grove in 1893 when I was almost a year old, having purchased a farm whose holdings he increased to 235 acres.

By the standards of his day, Papa was a progressive citizen. An early advocate of diversified farming, he produced not only cotton and corn (the accepted ag products of his time) but also hay, hogs and dairy products. He rarely went to town or sent in one of his boys without having something to sell. Before there was such a thing as a soil conservation program, he was taking steps to retard erosion. All of his barnyard manure went to replenish the soil. He built a drag and with his teams and his sons he dragged the unpaved black land road from his home to Honey Grove, a distance of two miles, following every rain. He built the first rural telephone line in his community and purchased the 189th auto (a Rambler 63) in the County of Fannin. He piped water from his well to the stock trough. He built one of the nicest country homes and the biggest barn in his community. He arranged for hot and cold running water in his wife's kitchen and later in a bathroom with a bath tub! But no "indoor plumbing" as the septic tank had not then been developed, otherwise he would probably have installed one.

Like his father, Papa was a man of high ideals and standards and a strict disciplinarian. While I had great respect (and fear) for him, I never developed much warmth for him. However, toward others he had a kindly spirit and a keen sense of humor,which qualities endeared him to hundreds both within and outside of the family. He and his sister, Ela, were very devoted to each other.

He and my mother were a great team and shared ideals for themselves and for their children. We were sent to the best school available, the public school at Honey Grove; at a time when it was customary for families to keep children out of school to help with the planting and gathering of the crops, we were never kept out of school a single day for this purpose. Furthermore, they encouraged us in taking any schooling that we wanted past high school and assisted us financially to the extent of their ability. Papa and Mama took us in to town for both Sunday School and church unless prevented by illness or very bad weather. Papa was made an elder June 5, 1898 and continued as such throughout his lifetime, both he and our mother being very loyal to the Presbyterian Church.

Top soil on the Honey Grove farm was thin and labor costs were rising. Bear in mind that this was in the day before tractors which meant that a great portion of land was devoted to raising feed for the horses and mules to operate the farm. Furthermore as the sons grew up and began to leave home the matter of labor supply became more acute.

So in 1917 Papa traded the farm for a 1400 acre ranch in Young County in the Gooseneck Bend of the Brazos River just out of Graham. Here he raised Hereford cattle and got great joy out of operating the ranch. Good fortune smiled on him in 1924 with the bringing in of three oil wells on his ranch. While the production was found to be limited, he at least got enough out of it to pay off the balance on the ranch and build a good home for himself and his wife in Graham. With failing health he sold the ranch in 1944 and spent the rest of his days with Mama in the home. With recurrent trouble in the urinal tract, the last 10 years of his life were beset with instances of surgery and residences in hospitals. However, his spirit was strong to the very last and he never complained. He died November 16, 1947 and is buried beside his wife in Oakwood Cemetery in Graham.

Papa was always identified with those things which helped the community. At Graham he served several terms as water commissioner on the city council, during one term of which Lake Eddleman, the present source of municipal water for Graham, was built.

As a young man he became a Master Mason and throughout his lifetime the work of the Masonic Lodge was his principal mental recreation. He received many high honors, the one that he cherished most being the presentation to him with appropriate ceremony of a gold-trimmed altar on his completion of 50 years in Masonry. He was a Knight Templar and a Shriner, and at one time took a great interest in DeMolay, but in later years devoted most of his energies to the Chapter.

Prepared by
Olin S. Hockaday
August 2, 1956

J. W. HOCKADAY
1870 - 1947

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

JIMMIE WILLIAMSON HOCKADAY

Jimmie Williamson Hockaday was born near Ladonia, Texas July 29, 1870. On Christmas Day of 1893 he married Miss Neria Irving, daughter of Professor Peyton Irving, of Cleburne, Texas. To this union the following children were born:

Irving Thomas Hockaday	November 9, 1894 at Terrell, Texas
Fred James Hockaday	September 13, 1896 at Terrell, Texas
Neria Hockaday (Mrs. Gerald I. Kohl)	May 23, 1901 at Itasca, Texas
Harold Kerr Hockaday	October 18, 1902 at Itasca, Texas

Father had a mechanical bent which, as the following account of his career will develop, manifested itself in a series of experiences as superintendent or administrator of various technical or mechanical processes. He had a vivid personality and was a man of unquenchable enthusiasm and boundless energy. In addition to the practical experience he acquired as he went along, he augmented his technical knowledge by attendance at short courses throughout the years at Texas A & M College and the Georgia School of Technology.

Father left Pecan Gap where he was working on Grandpa's farm and took a position as superintendent of the oil mill in Terrell, Texas, where Irving and Fred were born. Later he went to Itasca and operated the electric light plant, along with acting as superintendent of the Swift & Company oil mill there. The light plant also incorporated the city water works and the telephone system.

Uncle Albert joined him as a partner in the Itasca light plant and later bought out my father's interest at which time Father moved to Chickasha, Oklahoma to operate the light plant there which he was able to get control of at that time. Chickasha was then in the Indian Territory, as it was later (1907) that the Territory was made part of Oklahoma.

Father sold the plant in Chickasha and moved to Cooper, Texas where he bought the light plant. This plant was destroyed by fire which resulted in a total loss as no insurance was carried on the property. At the time he was also serving as superintendent of the Ladonia cotton oil mill. The townspeople and the Delta National Bank had faith in his ability and with help from this source he was able to rebuild the plant, changing from the 110 volt system to 220. There were no meters - only a $1.50 per month flat rate was charged, the lights being turned on at twilight and off with the break of dawn. In 1907 he sold the plant and moved back to Chickasha where he was made superintendent of the Chickasha cotton oil mill, - the largest in Oklahoma at that time.

Father purchased and operated a light and ice plant in 1909 at Granbury, Texas, but after two years returned to his favorite occupation, that of superintendent of oil mills at various points in Oklahoma and Texas.

In October of 1912, his beloved wife and our dear mother died.

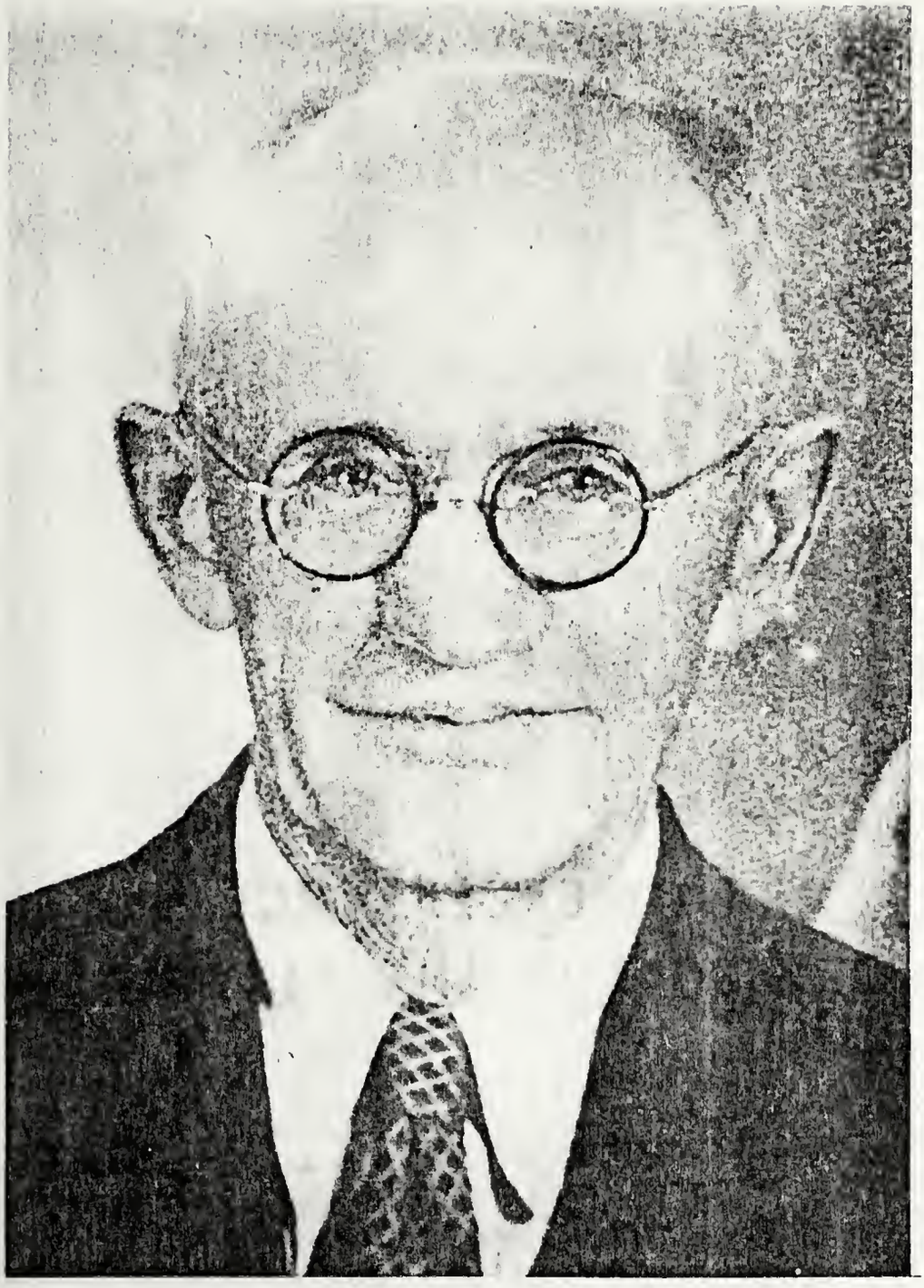
In 1920 he became superintendent of water works at Cleburne,Texas and continued in this capacity until 1927. In the present day hullabaloo re water conservation, we should recall that Father early recognized this problem and was a pioneer in developing remedial measures. Shortly after undertaking the Cleburne operation, he noted that "delivered to customers" fell far short of pumpage which he also noted was abnormally high for the number of customers. Cleburne derived its water from wells, and as the water table dropped, the problem of supply became more pronounced, so Father got busy overhauling the decrepit meters which resulted in high bills and a suggestion to stop leaks on customers' premises. This program of conservation within a year's time drastically reduced the demand on the supply, - and resulted in more realistic billing.

Father came to Florida in 1937 and took over the light and water plants at Green Cove Springs. It was there that he was almost electrocuted, having contacted a 2300 volt wire; he was unconscious for eight hours, and his right hand badly scarred from the burn which resulted in his having to learn to write with his left hand. World War II came along and the Navy moved into Green Cove Springs with about 700 ships - literally taking over that community and so he came to Jacksonville where for the duration of the war he was engaged at the Gibbs Ship Yards.

After the war Father went to Gainesville, Florida to manage a box plant owned by Atkins Manufacturing Corporation. This company was eventually forced to curtail activities because of a scarcity of lumber and so he accepted a managerial assignment with the Florida Farm Colony. He held this position until December 21, 1947 when with four others of the Colony he was walking along a highway going to Sunday evening church services and a young man in a newly purchased Mercury became blinded by bright lights and struck Father in an unavoidable accident, this resulting in instant death. His body was brought to Jacksonville and in accordance with his expressed wishes, was cremated - the ashes being deposited in an urn along-side the grave of his dear wife in the cemetery at Cleburne.

At the time of his death Father was an ardent Presbyterian, and a Mason, having his membership in the Royal Arch Chapter, and also a Rotarian. He remarked just 21 days before his death that he would be the next son of T.H.B. Hockaday to pass on and this came to be the case. "If I had my life to live over again, I would not have handled it any different," he once said. When asked if he was sure of this - he thought for a moment and said, "Yes, there is one thing - I would LISTEN to salesmen and thereby acquire more knowledge."

Prepared by
Fred J. Hockaday
Jacksonville, Florida
September 20, 1956



ALBERT S. HOCKADAY

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

ALBERT SHEPPERSON HOCKADAY

Albert Shepperson Hockaday was born January 31, 1873 at the home place near Pecan Gap. When he was eight years old his mother died, but his father raised him, along with the other boys, at home with the assistance of a colored woman named Jennie who kept house for them. For a period he attended Austin College at Sherman. He continued to live at the home place until after Brown and Minnie married. From 1896-1902 he worked for his older brother, Fred, in his hardware store at Honey Grove.

With his brother, Jimmie, he became interested in the electric light plant and the telephone exchange at Itasca. In time he disposed of his interest in the Itasca telephone business and became sole owner of the light plant.

On December 16, 1902 he married Mary Walcott Allen at Honey Grove. To this union the following children were born:

	Born	Died
Ela Wayne	February 28, 1908	February 18, 1910
Albert Shepperson, Jr.	March 20, 1909	
Ted McLean	June 29, 1912	
Ernest Bray	March 29, 1915	

Albert operated the electric plant at Itasca until bought out by Texas Power and Light Company in 1913. He continued as manager until 1917 when he was transferred to Hillsboro.

It might be pointed out that at the time that Albert went into the electric business at Itasca about the only use was for lighting, this being done with incandescent carbon filament electric lamps with service from sundown to sunup. As generators, he had two direct current 45 KW 110 volt "dynamos" belted to reciprocating engines, non-condensing, with steam supplied by a H.R.T. boiler at 110 lbs. pressure. The fuel was McAlister slack but later on he converted to oil, being a pioneer in the use of fuel oil.

Albert envisioned the wider use of electric service and bought a single cylinder 15 HP oil engine to provide service on Tuesdays for ironing and in warm weather for electric fans. He did his own line work, reading what meters he had (most of the customers were on flat rate), collected his bills and in fact ran the entire operation with the assistance of a night engineer.

When the Itasca system was hooked on to the "hi-line" he went after electric cooking and motor for unloading fan at the cotton gin in his town. He was also instrumental in electrifying the Itasca cotton mill.

After a time with Texas Power and Light Company at Hillsboro he bought a ranch near Blum and lived on it for about five years. The ranching venture did not work out so well so he went back to public electric work, and from 1929-1934 was associated with the utility company at Olney, Texas.

On November 1, 1934 he went to Royalty as manager, a 24 hour job, for Texas Electric Service Company, the electric energy in that plant being supplied by small diesel engines. He later served in a similar capacity in Andrews and on October 28, 1942 he was transferred to Big Spring, where he continues to be employed in the diesel engine power plant of Texas Electric Service Company.

Albert is a Mason and for many years has been an elder in the Presbyterian Church.

Prepared by
Olin S. Hockaday
and verified by
Albert S. Hockaday, Sr.
August 23, 1956

ELA HOCKADAY
1875 - 1956

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

ELA HOCKADAY

Much has been written about Auntie's greatness, so I shall confine myself to a brief and rather factual account of her life.

Auntie was born March 12, 1875, at the home place near Pecan Gap. In Grandpa's Bible, which has in it a place for recording family events, her name is entered as Eliza with alteration and shortening to Ela. When she was hardly 6 years old, her mother died; so her sister, Emma, by this time a young woman 20 years old, married and living at Bonham, "took her to raise." She grew up with Aunt Emma's family, attending school at Bonham. At an early age she was attracted to school teaching, probably influenced by her father's experience as an educator. At the age of 18 she began her own teaching career. My earliest recollection of her is of her standing at the front door at the Sunshine school near her father's home and with a hand bell calling the children in from recess.

It was readily apparent that Auntie was an extraordinary young woman; she was most attractive and had many beaux, but she also had a keen interest in the beautiful and inspirational phases of life. She teamed up with her cousin, Helen Kerr, and during the summers they attended "Normals" where they earned additional credits for teaching and took advantage of such cultural events as came their way. Aunt Emma encouraged these interests and more than once arranged a trip that would expose Auntie to things cultural.

In promoting one of these trips, according to Elizabeth Walker, Aunt Emma had Auntie's clothes ready and had shaken the brothers down for a little expense money. Auntie, however, was rather indifferent to the idea, but on Aunt Emma's making the remark, "But Ela, think of the refinement you will acquire from this trip," the young lady was full of enthusiasm for going.

For some time Auntie was principal of the Jefferson ward school in Sherman. Miss Trent used to tell this story as to how she got this appointment: It seems that Jefferson School was located "on the other side of the tracks" and had in it some tough boys who had posed quite a problem. The superintendent was told that Miss Hockaday "had a way" with situations of this sort, so she was asked to take over. Before long, Auntie had these boys eating out of her hand, having appealed to some of their constructive interests. A music store offered an upright piano to the ward school showing the greatest cultural development, and Jefferson won the piano!

While in Sherman, Auntie became a staunch friend of Miss Cammie Starnes, a well-to-do land owner of Grayson County. Together they attended the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis and made a number of trips during the summers to Manitou, Colorado. I recall that on returning from one of these trips, Auntie brought me and my two younger brothers three wonderful pencil boxes, shaped like books, flat and about 5" x 10" in size.

Following this, Auntie studied at Columbia University but her work was interrupted by the death December 22, 1905 of her sister Emma. She returned home and taught in State Normal School at Durant, Oklahoma and there came in contact with Miss Trent. Due to some political upheaval they left in about 1911 and as "farmerettes," a popular term applied to lady farmers of the day, bought 40 acres of land near Falfurrias, Texas. They sank a well and put in a pump for irrigation purposes, raising melons and tomatoes.

In the summer of 1913 Mr. M. B. Terrell, who at that time was operating a successful boys' preparatory school in Dallas, asked Auntie to come to Dallas and discuss with him and some prominent citizens plans for a similar school for girls. These plans led to the opening on September 25, 1913 of the Miss Hockaday School for Girls. She called for Miss Trent to come and help her, and a year later the boarding department was organized by Miss Miriam M. M. Morgan. The boarding department had its home in a big residence on Live Oak Street, while the school house was around the corner on Haskell Avenue, the site now occupied by the Y.W.C.A. The first class, consisting of nine lovely girls, was graduated in the spring of 1916.

The school prospered, the Carruth homestead on Greenville Avenue was purchased, the main building was erected, and it was occupied by the school on August 30, 1919.

In the meantime, the Lower School had been developed, and in 1931 the Junior College was organized. It was discontinued in 1951 as a result of the change in trend of young women's college education. It was found that young women nowadays, in this period of postwar prosperity, seek a B.A. degree.

During the Twenties the school grew in reputation with Auntie as its president and with Misses Morgan and Trent and other fine women as her associates.

The travel classes were organized during the summers, and Auntie and Miss Morgan made many trips abroad themselves. On these trips Auntie began to acquire a notable collection of antiques, for which she became famous.

After 33 years as a dynamic president of the school, Auntie retired as active administrator in 1946 but continued to reign over The Cottage. Many prominent people were entertained there, and friends and family always counted it a privilege to be invited to The Cottage. The last family gathering was a gala occasion on New Year's day of 1956, giving those present a memory that they will always cherish.

Despite the many demands made on her as president of the school and the claims made on her time by socially prominent people, Auntie had a strong attachment for her family. She was always most gracious to any of us who came to see her and readily responded to any family emergency that arose. I shall never forget the comfort she was to my mother and father when their only daughter, Lizzie, died and to me and my wife when Bobby died.

We can all bear testimony to the inspiration she was to us as well as to other young people. In a recent letter Neria said, "Aunt Ela lifted my horizon, and I will always be grateful to her for that. Once upon a time the world was as large as Cleburne or Cooper, but after going to Dallas and coming under her influence, the world grew much larger. Perhaps it was just a case of growing up; but nevertheless Aunt Ela made me feel that the stars were the limit, and each one had to or could reach them if the effort were concentrated."

I am sure all of the rest of us can reflect this same sentiment.

Min Kerr remarked that Auntie had the intuition always to sense when a person needed help or comfort and always said or did the right thing at the right time.

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In the memorial issue of the alumnae magazine, Cousin Helen Thompson relates this incident as an example of Auntie's genuine concern of others: "It was back when escalators were first used in department stores. They were rather frightening, and as we were about to step on, we noticed a little lady standing there, apparently afraid. I was going by, intent on conquering my own fears, but Miss Hockaday took the frightened lady by the arm and said, 'Come on. Let's go down together.'"

While Auntie gave a reporter of the Dallas Times Herald an interview at the beginning of the year 1956, on "looking forward," a thoroughly inspirational message, she must have had a premonition that her life was drawing to a close. On February 6 she had me meet her at Sparkman-Brand Mortuary in Dallas to arrange details for her final service, including the selection of the casket in which she was buried. She had Min Kerr come in and put her business affairs in order. On Sunday, February 12, a severe headache began, and the next day she complained of a numbness in her right hand. Also, she had some difficulty with her speech. Toward the end of that week however, she improved and even went to her beauty shop and what proved to be a last sitting for a portrait being painted by Alexander Clayton.

The headache recurred; and on the morning of Thursday, February 23, she collapsed in the bathroom, severely burning her right arm on a near-by gas heater. She was taken to the hospital and died March 26, the day after Palm Sunday. She had expressed the hope repeatedly that her last illness not be prolonged and she almost got her wish. The cause of her death was given as "cerebral arterial thrombosis," and she lies between Misses Morgan and Trent in Hillcrest Cemetery of Dallas. "The Three Musketeers" are indeed resting from their labors.

Truly a great woman of her time and a most distinguished person of her family, Auntie has been gathered unto her fathers.

Prepared by
Her devoted nephew
Olin S. Hockaday
August 10, 1956

DALLAS MORNING NEWS
MARCH 27, 1956

Miss Ela Hockaday Of Prep School Dies

Miss Ela Hockaday, 81, beloved founder and former president of The Hockaday School, died Monday in a Dallas hospital.

The Texas-born daughter of an early day educator, who in 1913 launched a tiny Dallas private school that grew into one with a national reputation, had been hospitalized since Feb. 23.

After 33 years as head mistress and then president of the school for girls, Miss Hockaday retired from the school administration in 1946, but had continued active in its affairs. She lived in The Cottage near the campus at Greenville and Belmont.

Funeral services will be at 3 p.m. Wednesday in First Presbyterian Church with Dr. John F. Anderson Jr., the pastor, officiating. Burial will be in Hillcrest Memorial Park.

She founded her famed school in a rented gray frame house on Haskell Avenue at the invitation of a group of Dallas residents. The late M. B. Terrill, who founded the Terrill School for Boys here, had recommended Miss Hockaday, who had attended a teachers college in Denton which he had headed.

The original school, with 10 pupils and $1,200 worth of equipment, has expanded into a $1,000,000 institution with an enrollment of 425 In 1942, she cancelled her majority stock, arranging for five other stockholders to do the same, and made a gift of the school to the alumnae and citizens of Dallas and the Southwest. It is now an independent, non-profit, incorporated educational institution operated by a board of trustees. The curriculum covers grades one through 12.

Miss Hockaday was born March 12, 1876, at Ladonia, Fannin County, the daughter of the late Thomas Hart Benton Hockaday, who shortly before the civil war came from Tennessee to East Texas and established one of the old frontier academies near Ladonia where young Texans were taught mathematics, Latin and Greek.

Her mother died when she was a small child, and she was reared by a sister.

Her father's strong faith in the classics as the foundation for learning was evident among the fundamentals of her own school as she rose to fame as an educator.

She was educated at Ladonia, the old Denton Normal School, now North Texas State College, and post-graduate work at the University of Chicago and Columbia University in New York City.

In 1940, she was awarded the doctor of literature degree by Austin College. But by that time she was too widely known and beloved as Miss Hockaday to assume the new title of Dr. Hockaday. And she remained Miss Hockaday to the thousands who had gone through her school rooms and to all other friends and acquaintances.

Her gifts as a school administrator were first shown when at the age of 26, shortly after the turn of the century, she was promoted from a classroom teacher to a school principal in the Sherman schools.

Her first triumph as an administrator was in handling spirited and restless boys, when other teachers found them exertmely difficult. She pioneered in establishing manual training shops and other activities, with which she rewarded good behavior. She soon had the boys following natural bents, developing into excellent students.

She headed the department of biological sciences at Oklahoma State Normal and was on the faculty at Oklahoma College for Women at Chickasha before coming to Dallas.

At the start of her Dallas school, only four grades, corresponding to high school, were offered. Soon the primary grades were added. By 1919, the frame house on Haskell and two residences on Live Oak could no longer contain the 150 students. The present site of 10 acres on Greenville Avenue, originally part of the Caruth Farm, was acquired and the main building erected. The reputation of Hockaday spread, and parents came from farther away to bring their daughters to the school. New buildings were added.

In 1928, Miss Hockaday sent the first Travel Class to Europe, an extension of Hockaday education. She opened the Junior College in 1931 (it was discontinued in 1951) and the Hockaday Music Institute was established in 1937.

Gracious and well-poised, Miss Hockaday believed that the development of fine character was the first duty of a school, along with broad scholarship and athletics for health. She believed that women should have education to prepare them both for careers and to grace a home. The development of habitual courtesy was another of her cardinal principles.

Her chapel exercises were conducted along broad lines, screened to meet the needs of any faith, offend none.

Like she had been reared by her sister, Miss Hockaday in her home reared two of her nieces Mrs. Ruth Johnson Kyle of Dallas and Mrs. Elizabeth Walker of Tyler.

In her farewell address as school president in 1946 she recalled what she considered her main achievement when she said: "I have seen very delicate, frail little fairy-like 6-year-old beings grow into clear-eyed, forward looking, magnificent women, sympathetic and helpful mothers, and honest, public-spirited citizens."

Much of this development was due to Miss Hockaday's guidance and example she offered her students.

Survivors are a brother, Albert Hockaday of Big Spring, and a number of nieces and nephews.

She was active in the Dallas Garden Club, Standards Literary Club of which she was a charter member. She belonged to many professional organizations and was honored with the Dallas Zonta Club's award for her outstanding achievements.

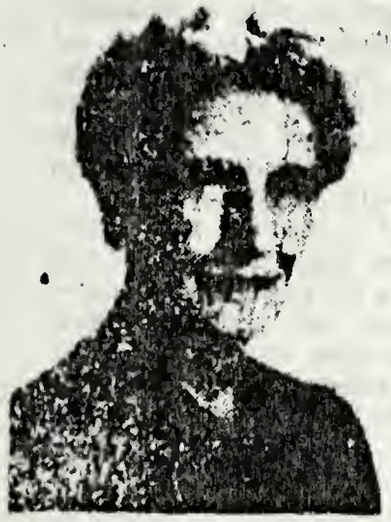
Miss Ela Hockaday . . . Beloved founder of girls' school dies.

DALLAS TIMES HERALD
MARCH 26, 1956

School's Founder, Miss Hockaday, Dies

Miss Ela Hockaday, 81, a pioneer in Dallas education and founder of the internationally famous Hockaday School for Girls here, died at 2:40 p.m. at Baylor Hospital Monday.

Beloved by generations of schoolgirls, Miss Hockaday retired in 1946 from the leadership of the school she had served for 33 years, but remained near its students and activities at her "Cottage" home at 5601 Bonita.



MISS ELA HOCKADAY
Dies in Dallas

Her ideals for graceful living, combining excellence of scholastic work with courtesy, character and physical development, continue at the institution which bears here name.

On her retirement, she said, "Everything God has given me of wisdom, love, ability and energy I have poured into this school. I feel that He has richly blessed me in allowing me to do this work and giving me the strength to see it through."

A native Texan, she was the daughter of Thomas Hart Benton Hockaday, who founded Hockaday Academy near Ladonia, Fannin County, after the Civil War. She attended the former North Texas Normal College in Denton, then headed by M. B. Terrill. Mr. Terrill, later founder of Terrill School for Boys in Dallas, was of major assistance to Miss Hockaday when she established her own school in 1913.

She worked as a teacher and grade school principal in Sherman for several years, then took advanced study at Teachers' College, Columbia University, before teaching five years in the Presbyterian School and the State Normal School in Durant, Okla.

Miss Hockaday received the LLD degree from Austin College, Sherman, in 1941 in recognition of her outstanding educational achievements.

The school has grown from 10 pupils in its first building on Haskell to an enrollment of 425.

Reviewing her years with the school, Miss Hockaday once said, "I have seen many delicate, frail little fairly-like six-year-old beings grow into clear-eyed, forward-looking, magnificent women, sympathetic and helpful mothers and honest, public-spirited citizens."

Miss Hockaday was a member of First Presbyterian Church and had been active in the women's work there since she joined in 1913. At the time of her illness, she was serving on the Fine Arts Committee of the church's Centennial Year.

Hockaday School claims no religious group affiliation, but promotes Christian teaching and environment, highlighted with daily chapel and Sunday vesper services.

"It is not given to everyone to spend his life doing work in which he believes," Miss Hockaday said on retiring, "nor is it given to everyone to see the results of his efforts in so tangible and gratifying a way as I see the results of mine. That is why I say I have been richly blessed."

Office work often took too much of her time while she headed the school. After retiring, she was able to give more personal counsel and encouragement to the girls, "my own girls," always her main interest.

Also at that time, she became president emeritus of the school and chairman of its building committee for development of a 245-acre tract near Belt Line Rd. presented to the school by its alumnae.

She opened a gift shop at "The Cottage" to fill her spare time and sold silver and china from England, among an assortment of gifts. Tied to each piece of merchandise she attached a frilly white bow, printed in green with "Miss Hockaday."

She was still a dignified, stately lady, witty and young at heart, when friends and family honored her on her 80th birthday last year. Her "Cottage" was filled with priceless antiques gathered in a lifetime of travel and pot plant remembrances from students.

She is survived by a brother, Albert S. Hockaday of Big Spring; nieces, Mrs. Ruth Kyle of Dallas, Mrs. Elizabeth Walker of Tyler, Mrs. Fay (Bessie) Holcombe of San Antonio, Mrs. V. E. Kendall of Oklahoma City and Mrs. Gerald Kohl of New York City; nephews, Olin S. Hockaday of Fort Worth, Irving T. Hockaday of Houston, Benton S. Hockaday of Graham, Donald E. Hockaday of Mineral Wells, Albert T. Hockaday of El Paso, Hallie A. and Harold Hockaday of San Antonio, Albert S. Hockaday, Jr., of Baton Rouge, La., Earl Hockaday of Oklahoma City, Fred Hockaday of Jacksonville, Fla., Ted Hockaday of Washington, D. C., and Ernest Hockaday of Haines, Alaska.

School's Founder, Miss Hockaday, Dies

DALLAS TIMES-HERALD - MARCH 28, 1956

Miss Hockaday

MISS ELA HOCKADAY, founder and for more than three decades head of the Hockaday School for Girls in Dallas, was highly gifted. She used to the utmost her wisdom, energy and love to equip thousands of girls for happy lives and useful citizenship. Her death this week occasions great sorrow, not only among her former students but in the community at large to which she made a tremendous cultural contribution.

A native Texan, Miss Hockaday was educated at the former North Texas Normal College in Denton and Columbia University. She taught for a number of years before founding her own institution in 1913. Even since retiring in 1946, Miss Hockaday has continued to counsel "my girls," as she called her students. She lived to see Hockaday's enrollment grow from 10 to more than 400, and its efforts to inculcate knowledge, character and physical fitness pay rich dividends in children who, as she once phrased it, grew into "magnificent women, sympathetic and helpful mothers and honest, public-spirited citizens."

In many ways aside from education, Miss Hockaday labored to make Dallas a better community. She was active in the women's work of the First Presbyterian Church, and in numerous civic and cultural projects over the years. Few persons have accomplished more than Miss Hockaday toward making Dallas a great as well as a big city.

DALLAS MORNING NEWS
MARCH 28, 1956

HOCKADAY

Miss Ela, 5601 Bonita. Survived by brother, Albert Hockaday, Big Spring, Texas; nephew, Olin S. Hockaday, Fort Worth; niece, Mrs. Ruth Kyle, Dallas; numerous other nephews and nieces. Remains to lie in state at "The Cottage," 5601 Bonita, from 2 p.m. Tuesday until 1 p.m. Wednesday, then at the First Presbyterian Church from 2 p.m. until service time, 3 p.m. Wednesday. Dr. John F. Anderson Jr. officiating. Interment Hillcrest. Pallbearers: William Blessing, Carl Callaway, Myron Everts, Jake Hamon, Phil Kelton, William C. McCord, Shelby McDaniel, W. C. Miller, Bruder Penniman, W. C. Scurry, Vernett Slater, Joe C. Thompson, Lansing S. Thorn, Dr. Guy Tittle, Harold Volk, John Vitters, San Antonio; Ambrose Gerner, Houston; J. K. Wadley, Texarkana. Honorary pallbearers: Trustees of Hockaday School. Flowers are acceptable or donations to the Ela Hockaday Memorial Fund.

SPARKMAN-BRAND, ST-2187

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Dallas, Texas

DALLAS MORNING NEWS
MARCH 28, 1956

'Miss Ela'

Among those who have greatly enriched the life of Dallas and the Southwest is Ela Hockaday, whose death at 81 takes a long-beloved figure from the active scene. The example and influence of this noted educator will persist to benefit untold generations who come after her.

Miss Hockaday came of pioneer teaching stock, and it was her distinction to bring over into modern life the main values inherent in our rude frontier schooling. The Hockaday School for Girls, which she founded and which she gave to the community more than 10 years ago, is her enduring monument.

The building of character, as Ela Hockaday saw it, is the great end of education. To that end she molded young hearts and minds to become seekers after knowledge, ever holding fast to the ideal of the golden mean that calls for a well-trained mind in a healthy body. And with that goal she inspired a realization of spiritual values, both personal and civic, which are the extra dimension of the truly educated person. Withal, she carried out her long life's work with a personal grace and charm that underscored her place as one of the great women of Texas.

DESCENDANTS OF THOMAS HART BENTON HOCKADAY (1835-1918)
AND MARIA ELIZABETH KERR (d. 1881)

FREDERICK THOMPSON HOCKADAY (1858-1909)

Earl (address unknown)

Nellie (Mrs. V. E. Kendall - Oklahoma City, Oklahoma)

EMMA BLANCHE HOCKADAY JOHNSON (1861-1905)

Harvey Brown Johnson (dec.)

Forrest Hockaday Johnson
(deceased)

- Mary Margaret Johnson
(Mrs. Wm. B. Roberts)
60 Laroga Ave.
Davis Is., Tampa, Fla.
  - Florence Ann Roberts
- Emma Gertrude Johnson
(Mrs. Jos. E. Hutto)
401 Columbia Dr.
Davis Is., Tampa, Fla.
  - Robert Forrest Hess
401 Columbia Dr.
Davis Is., Tampa, Fla.
    - Debora Ann Hess
    - Allyson Lee Hess
  - Margaret Powell Hess
(Mrs. James E. Kale, Jr.)
1035-51 St., West, Apt. 1
Birmingham, Alabama
    - Stephen Michael Kale
    - Wm. Roberts Kale

Sarah Elizabeth Johnson Walker
1619 So. College
Tyler, Texas

- Annette Walker
(Mrs. L. E. Amsbury)
5218 Brunswick
Houston, Texas
  - David L. Amsbury
4313 Vivian, Bellaire
Houston, Texas
  - Wayne Paul Amsbury
Physics Dept.
Duke University
Durham, No. Carolina
- J. E. Walker, Jr.
1619 So. College
Tyler, Texas
  - Scott Hemphill Walker
  - Gary Mills Walker
  - Kelly Wayne Walker
- Wayne Walker
1619 So. College
Tyler, Texas

Ruth Kerr Johnson Kyle
5736 Southwestern Blvd.
Dallas 9, Texas

- Ela Hockaday Kyle
(Mrs. Michael Blackwood)
136 W. 92 St.
New York 25, New York

EDGAR PARK HOCKADAY (1864-1947)

Fay Elizabeth Hockaday Holcombe
San Antonio, Texas

Albert Thomas Hockaday
El Paso, Texas

Hallie Alfred Hockaday
San Antonio, Texas

CLARENCE BROWN HOCKADAY (1868-1947)

Olin Scott Hockaday
2412 Shirley Avenue
Fort Worth 9, Texas

Ela Hockaday II
(Mrs. Bill Camfield)
4637 Houghton
Fort Worth, Texas

- Paul Hockaday Camfield
- Mary Martha Camfield

Benton Samuel Hockaday
1400 E. 4th Street
Graham, Texas

John F. Hockaday
2918 Mayhew
Dallas, Texas

- Michael John Hockaday
- Patrick Brown Hockaday

Clarence Brown Hockaday, Jr.
(deceased)

Barbara Hockaday
(Mrs. Albert King)
#6-11465 - 132nd Street
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada

Donald Emmett Hockaday
Route 1 Box 258
Mineral Wells, Texas

Donald E. Hockaday, Jr.
1336 East 32nd Place
Tulsa, Oklahoma

- Donald E. Hockaday III
- Mark Steven Hockaday

Lizzie Hockaday
(deceased)

JIMMIE WILLIAMSON HOCKADAY (1870-1947)

Irving Thomas Hockaday
1903 Lauderdale
Houston, Texas

Mary Lou Hockaday
(Mrs. John F. Holloway)
9005 Larston Rd.
Houston, Texas

- John F. Holloway, Jr.
- Thomas Hockaday Holloway

Fred James Hockaday
Box 1892
Jacksonville 1, Florida

Nenia Hockaday
(Mrs. C. S. Kohl)
3527 80th Street
Jackson Heights, New York

Nenia Hockaday Kohl
(Mrs. James E. Ryder)
59 Fairham Street
Chatham, New Jersey

- Nenia Gay Ryder
- Duncan Ellsworth Ryder
- Kolstin Isabel Ryder
- Evan James Ryder

Harold Kerr Hockaday
507 Rockhill
San Antonio, Texas

Patsy Hockaday

ALBERT SHEPHERSON HOCKADAY (1873-1958)

Ela Wayne Hockaday (deceased)

Albert S. Hockaday, Jr.
4693 Loyola Drive
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Mary Jane Hockaday

Ted McLean Hockaday
1001-26th Street, South
Arlington 2, Virginia

Ernest Bray Hockaday
c/o General Delivery
Haines, Alaska

ELA HOCKADAY (1875-1956)

Compiled by: O. S. Hockaday
March 9, 1959

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